



Abstinence Education

Parents, educators, and teens agree that abstinence education provides safe, healthy, and age-appropriate information to help adolescents make reliable decisions about their sexuality. With 60% of sexually active teens reporting that they wish they'd delayed their initial sexual experiences, it's important for youth and the adults in their lives to send a strong, encouraging message about abstinence. By supporting abstinence education, programs can be offered to young people that positively impact state and national costs, health outcomes, physical and emotional development, academic achievement, and future well-being.

Teen Pregnancy: the Numbers

- 3 in 10 teen girls in the U.S. will become pregnant at least once before age 20.
- Over 800,000 teens become pregnant every year.
- Nationally, teen childbearing costs taxpayers at least \$9.1 billion a year.
- When a teenager has a child, the nation pays approximately \$120,000 for expenses such as medical care, social assistance programs, and efforts to combat higher rates of abuse and neglect among these young parents.
- Daughters of teen moms are 22% more likely to become teen moms themselves.

What are the Benefits?

Abstinence protects health

- About 19 million new cases of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) occur each year in the U.S. - about half of these are in young people under 25.
- Every year, 1 out of 5 young people ages 15 to 24 may get an STI.
- A 2005 study of youth in grades 7-11 found that engaging in premarital sex often leads to depression. Compared to girls who abstain, girls who engage in premarital sex are two to three times more likely to be depressed one year later.
- Teens who engage in premarital sex are also likely to experience regret, guilt, lowered self-esteem, fear of commitment, and worries about pregnancy and STIs.

***Abstinent teens are almost
twice as likely to graduate from college.***



Everybody's NOT doing it!!!

The truth is that ***less than one third of teenagers age 17 and younger have had sex.*** In fact, a report released from the CDC indicates that teen birth rates have decreased by 37% in the past two decades. 2006 to 2008 survey results from the National Center for Health Statistics indicate that 68% of teenage boys and 67% of girls ages 15 to 17 have not had sexual intercourse. Additionally, 53% of boys and 58% of girls report never having had oral, anal, or vaginal sex with anyone.

Abstinence contributes to increased academic success and reduced delinquency

- Early sexual activity corresponds to a 20% increase in the likelihood of criminal behavior later in life.
- Late sexual activity corresponds to a 50% decrease in the likelihood of criminal behavior later in life.
- The sons of teen mothers are twice as likely to end up in prison.
- Abstinent teens are 50% less likely to drop out of high school.
- Abstinent teens are 60% less likely to be expelled from school.
- Parenthood is the leading reason why teen girls drop out of school.
- Less than half of teen mothers ever graduate from high school, and fewer than 2% earn a college degree by age 30.

Parents: Get Involved!

Teens continue to say that parents can have a great deal of influence when it comes to their decisions about sex.

- 8 in 10 individuals say that it would be much easier for teens to delay sexual activity and avoid teen pregnancy if they were able to have more open, honest conversations about these topics with their parents.
- 91% of teens and 93% of adults think that it is important for teens to be given a strong message that they should not have sex until they are at least out of high school.
- Parents prefer abstinence over comprehensive sex education 2:1.